

Assembly Bill No. 746

CHAPTER 1112

An act to amend Sections 8714, 8715, 8802, and 8807 of the Family Code, relating to adoption.

[Approved by Governor September 29, 2002. Filed
with Secretary of State September 29, 2002.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 746, La Suer. Nonresident petitioners: adoption.

Existing law provides that a prospective adoptive parent may file a petition for an agency adoption or an independent adoption of a child in the county in which the petitioner resides.

This bill would further provide that if the petitioner is not a resident of this state, he or she may file a petition for an agency adoption or an independent adoption in the county in which the birth parent or birth parents resided when the relinquishment of parental rights for purpose of adoption was signed, or in the county in which the birth parent or birth parents resided when the adoption placement agreement was signed or the county in which the placing birth parent or birth parents resided when the petition was signed, respectively. The bill would, in the instances in which the petitioner is the resident of another state, require that an updated and current homestudy report, conducted and approved by a licensed adoption agency or other authorized resource in the state in which the petitioner resides, be reviewed and endorsed by the State Department of Social Services, as specified.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 8714 of the Family Code is amended to read:

8714. (a) A person desiring to adopt a child may for that purpose file a petition in the county in which the petitioner resides or, if the petitioner is not a resident of this state, in the county in which the birth parent or birth parents resided when the relinquishment of parental rights for the purpose of adoption was signed. Where a child has been adjudged to be a dependent of the juvenile court pursuant to Section 300 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, and has thereafter been freed for adoption by the juvenile court, the petition may be filed either in the county where the petitioner resides or in the county where the child was freed for adoption.

(b) The court clerk shall immediately notify the department at Sacramento in writing of the pendency of the proceeding and of any subsequent action taken.

(c) If the petitioner has entered into a postadoption contact agreement with the birth parent as set forth in Section 8714.7, the agreement, signed by the participating parties, shall be attached to and filed with the petition for adoption under subdivision (a).

(d) The caption of the adoption petition shall contain the names of the petitioners, but not the child's name. The petition shall state the child's sex and date of birth. The name the child had before adoption shall appear in the joinder signed by the licensed adoption agency.

(e) If the child is the subject of a guardianship petition, the adoption petition shall so state and shall include the caption and docket number or have attached a copy of the letters of the guardianship or temporary guardianship. The petitioners shall notify the court of any petition for guardianship or temporary guardianship filed after the adoption petition. The guardianship proceeding shall be consolidated with the adoption proceeding.

(f) The order of adoption shall contain the child's adopted name, but not the name the child had before adoption.

SEC. 2. Section 8715 of the Family Code is amended to read:

8715. (a) The department or licensed adoption agency, whichever is a party to, or joins in, the petition, shall submit a full report of the facts of the case to the court.

(b) If the child has been adjudged to be a dependent of the juvenile court pursuant to Section 300 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, and has thereafter been freed for adoption by the juvenile court, the report required by this section shall describe whether the requirements of subdivision (e) of Section 16002 of the Welfare and Institutions Code have been completed and what, if any, plan exists for facilitation of postadoptive contact between the child who is the subject of the adoption petition and his or her siblings and half siblings.

(c) If a petition for adoption has been filed with a postadoption contact agreement pursuant to Section 8714.7, the report shall address whether the postadoption contact agreement has been entered into voluntarily, and whether it is in the best interests of the child who is the subject of the petition.

(d) The department may also submit a report in those cases in which a licensed adoption agency is a party or joins in the adoption petition.

(e) If a petitioner is a resident of a state other than California, an updated and current homestudy report, conducted and approved by a licensed adoption agency or other authorized resource in the state in which the petitioner resides, shall be reviewed and endorsed by the



department or licensed adoption agency, if the standards and criteria established for a homestudy report in the other state are substantially commensurate with the homestudy standards and criteria established in California adoption regulations.

SEC. 3. Section 8802 of the Family Code is amended to read:

8802. (a) (1) Any of the following persons who desire to adopt a child may, for that purpose, file a petition in the county in which the petitioner resides or, if the petitioner is not a resident of this state, in the county in which the placing birth parent or birth parents resided when the adoption placement agreement was signed, or the county in which the placing birth parent or birth parents resided when the petition was filed

(A) An adult who is related to the child or the child's half sibling by blood or affinity, including all relatives whose status is preceded by the words "step," "great," "great-great," or "grand," or the spouse of any of these persons, even if the marriage was terminated by death or dissolution.

(B) A person named in the will of a deceased parent as an intended adoptive parent where the child has no other parent.

(C) A person with whom a child has been placed for adoption.

(D) A legal guardian who has been the child's legal guardian for more than one year. However, if the parent nominated the guardian for a purpose other than adoption for a specified time period, or if the guardianship was established pursuant to Section 360 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, the guardianship shall have been in existence for not less than three years.

(2) If the child has been placed for adoption, a copy of the adoptive placement agreement shall be attached to the petition. The court clerk shall immediately notify the department at Sacramento in writing of the pendency of the proceeding and of any subsequent action taken.

(b) The petition shall contain an allegation that the petitioners will file promptly with the department or delegated county adoption agency information required by the department in the investigation of the proposed adoption. The omission of the allegation from a petition does not affect the jurisdiction of the court to proceed or the validity of an adoption order or other order based on the petition.

(c) The caption of the adoption petition shall contain the names of the petitioners, but not the child's name. The petition shall state the child's sex and date of birth and the name the child had before adoption.

(d) If the child is the subject of a guardianship petition, the adoption petition shall so state and shall include the caption and docket number or have attached a copy of the letters of the guardianship or temporary guardianship. The petitioners shall notify the court of any petition for



guardianship or temporary guardianship filed after the adoption petition. The guardianship proceeding shall be consolidated with the adoption proceeding.

(e) The order of adoption shall contain the child's adopted name, but not the name the child had before adoption.

SEC. 4. Section 8807 of the Family Code is amended to read:

8807. (a) Except as provided in subdivisions (b) and (c), within 180 days after the filing of the petition, the department or delegated county adoption agency shall investigate the proposed independent adoption and submit to the court a full report of the facts disclosed by its inquiry with a recommendation regarding the granting of the petition.

(b) If the investigation establishes that there is a serious question concerning the suitability of the petitioners or the care provided the child or the availability of the consent to adoption, the report shall be filed immediately.

(c) In its discretion, the court may allow additional time for the filing of the report, after at least five days' notice to the petitioner or petitioners and an opportunity for the petitioner or petitioners to be heard with respect to the request for additional time.

(d) If a petitioner is a resident of a state other than California, an updated and current homestudy report, conducted and approved by a licensed adoption agency or other authorized resource in the state in which the petitioner resides, shall be reviewed and endorsed by the department or delegated county adoption agency, if the standards and criteria established for a homestudy report in the other state are substantially commensurate with the homestudy standards and criteria established in California adoption regulations.

